

**Collection #**  
**M 1083**  
**BV 4950**

## **WHEELER FAMILY COLLECTION, 1860–1999**

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Series Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Kate Scott  
April 2014

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes, 1 box graphics, 1 box photographs, 1 box OVA graphics, 1 loose tintype, 1 bound volume, 3 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: 1860s–1999

PROVENANCE: Hilah Katrina Remaily, Hammondsport, NY

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2013.0200, 2013.0343

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Indiana artist Clifton Alfred Wheeler was born in 1883 in Hadley, Indiana to Alonzo Wheeler and Matilda Smith Wheeler. He was the eldest of two boys. The other, Elvin Wheeler, eventually raised cattle in Mooresville, Indiana. When Clifton was very young, the family moved to Mooresville, where Alonzo Wheeler owned and operated a flour mill. Upon graduating from high school, Clifton Wheeler studied art with the Indianapolis-area painter William Forsyth. In 1902 at the age of 19, Wheeler moved to New York City to study at the New York School of Art under William Merritt Chase, Robert Henri, and Kenneth Hayes Miller. Among his fellow students were Edward Hopper, George Bellows, Rockwell Kent, and Vachel Lindsay, several of whom he remained friends with later in life. In 1907 and 1910 he traveled to Italy as part of Chase's summer painting classes. In Italy in 1910 he met Gertrude and Leo Stein, as well as the artist Hilah Drake (ca. 1877–1970), whom he married that December. The couple moved back to the Indianapolis area, settling in Irvington. They had one child, Hilah Mary Wheeler (1911–2002), who also became an artist and later married George Remaily.

Wheeler made a modest living painting landscapes and portraits in a realist mode. He supplemented his income with teaching jobs, including summer courses at several colleges and a period as an art teacher at Shortridge High School in Indianapolis. Wheeler was dedicated to the Indianapolis artistic community, and was an active participant in the Indiana Artists Club, the Hoosier Salon, and the Art Association of Indianapolis. He exhibited frequently in Indiana, as well as in other Midwestern locations and in New York. In addition to his artistic activities, Wheeler was an avid hiker who traveled extensively throughout the United States, and many of his sketches and finished works feature locations from his travels. Both Clifton and Hilah Wheeler were members of the Indianapolis Portfolio club, of which he served as president in 1920–21. In 1952 he was named president of the Indianapolis Literary Club. Wheeler had several notable correspondents, including critic Walter Pach, artist-poet Vachel Lindsay, and the artists Rockwell Kent, Edward Hopper, and William Merritt Chase. Wheeler died of cancer at his Irvington home in 1953.

Sources: Collection materials, Indiana birth and death records, U.S Social Security Death Index (ancestry.com)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This is a collection of mixed materials from the 1860s–1999. While most of it pertains to Clifton Wheeler, a significant portion of the collection concerns Hilah Drake Wheeler, Hilah Wheeler Remaily, or the family in general.

The first series contains correspondence to or from all three Wheelers. Clifton Wheeler's correspondence is divided into business, family, and personal categories. Most letters between Clifton and Hilah Drake Wheeler are filed with his family correspondence.

The second series consists of Clifton Wheeler's handwritten personal writings. These are mostly loose notes on books or artistic practice, but also include a journal, an engagement book, and four composition books containing a single essay each.

Business materials comprise the third series. Included are two ledgers, exhibition pamphlets and leaflets, photographs of paintings, a list of paintings by Hilah Drake Wheeler with corresponding prices, a 1945 Shortridge High School class register, and loose business documents related mostly to Clifton Wheeler's teaching career. Three artifacts are part of the series: two paint brushes and an International Business Machines Corporation medal.

The fourth series consists of press materials pertaining to all three family members. Most of these are news clippings, but there is also a folder of Clifton Wheeler's radio scripts and interviews.

Miscellaneous printed matter makes up the fifth series. These include printed books owned by the family (including several addressing state and local history), periodicals, pamphlets related to various clubs or societies, and printed artist's booklets sent to Clifton Wheeler from Vachel Lindsay. One periodical of note is *The Western Freedmen's Bulletin* from January 1866.

Series six consists of materials specifically related to the Wheeler family and its history. There is one folder of loose documents such as family trees, reminiscences, Clifton Wheeler's State Militia discharge papers, and facsimiles of letters and comments received by Clifton Wheeler's mother in the nineteenth century. Also part of the series are family photographs and snapshots.

The seventh series is devoted to sketchbooks and other drawn materials. There are five sketchbooks from Hilah Drake Wheeler's childhood and early adult years, and nine sketchbooks from the later decades of Clifton Wheeler's career. Both artists are represented by a number of loose sketches. Also included is a handmade mock diploma given to Clifton Wheeler by Herron School of Art staff. A final item of note is a handmade book constructed by Portfolio (an Indianapolis arts and letters club) members for Charles and Lionne Rush in 1929. The book contains original handwritten poetry and artworks by Hilton U. Brown, J. Ottis Adams, Kurt and Edith Vonnegut, the Wheelers, and others.

Travel photographs and postcards comprise the eighth and final series. Most are domestic images, but a few depict Italy and Gibraltar.

## **SERIES CONTENTS**

### **Series 1: Correspondence**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Business Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 1
Business Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1903–45	Box 1, Folder 2
Business Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1946–53	Box 1, Folder 3
Family Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 4
Family Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1900–04	Box 1, Folder 5
Family Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1905–07	Box 1, Folder 6
Family Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1910–51	Box 1, Folder 7
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 8
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1905–17	Box 1, Folder 9
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1921–34	Box 1, Folder 10
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1935–38	Box 1, Folder 11
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1940–49	Box 1, Folder 12
Personal Correspondence, Clifton Wheeler, 1953	Box 1, Folder 13
Correspondence, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1910–57	Box 2, Folder 1
Correspondence, Hilah Wheeler Remaily, 1971–99	Box 2, Folder 2

### **Series 2: Clifton Wheeler's Personal Writings**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Loose Personal Writings, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 3
Loose Personal Writings, 1922–52	Box 2, Folder 4
“Student Days,” n.d.	Box 2, Folder 5
“Streetcar Conversations,” Oct. 1943	Box 2, Folder 6

“Some Methods of Painting Pictures,” 28 Oct. 1946	Box 2, Folder 7
“Hiking,” 10 Oct. 1949	Box 2, Folder 8
Loose Journal Pages, 1939	Box 2, Folder 9
Journal, 1934	Box 2, Folder 10
Journal, 1938	Box 2, Folder 11
Engagement Book, 1934–ca. 1950	Box 2, Folder 12

### **Series 3: Business and Professional Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
International Business Machines Corporation Medal	Artifacts
Paint Brush	Artifacts
Paint Brush	Artifacts
Photographs of Work, Clifton Wheeler, n.d.	Photographs Box 1, Folder 3
Photographs of Work, Clifton Wheeler, 1906–ca. 1952	Photographs Box 1, Folder 4
Ledger, 1901 and 1919–14	Box 3, Folder 1
Ledger, 1947–50	Box 3, Folder 2
Exhibition Pamphlets and Leaflets, 1911–29 and undated	Box 3, Folder 3
Exhibition Pamphlets and Leaflets, 1931–45	Box 3, Folder 4
Exhibition Pamphlets and Leaflets, 1946–80	Box 3, Folder 5
Shortridge High School Class Register, Spring 1945	Box 3, Folder 6
Loose Business and Professional Documents, 1910–50	Box 3, Folder 7

#### **Series 4: Press Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Interviews and Radio Scripts, Clifton Wheeler, ca. 1930s-50s	Box 3, Folder 8
News Articles by Clifton Wheeler, 1910-44	Box 3, Folder 9
News Clippings, Clifton Wheeler, n.d.	Box 3, Folder 10
News Clippings, Clifton Wheeler, 1911-39	Box 3, Folder 11
News Clippings, Clifton Wheeler, 1940-86	Box 3, Folder 12
News Clippings, Hilah Drake Wheeler, ca. 1910-39	Box 3, Folder 13
News Clipping, Hilah Wheeler Remaily, 1936	Box 3, Folder 14

#### **Series 5: Miscellaneous Printed Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
<i>The Western Freedmen's Bulletin</i> , Jan. 1866	Box 3, Folder 15
Oratorio Society of New York, Program Booklets, 1903 and 1905	Box 3, Folder 16
Materials from Vachel Lindsay, 1904-19 and undated	Box 3, Folder 17
<i>The Tree of Laughing Bells</i> , Vachel Lindsay, 1905	Box 3, Folder 18
<i>Fine Arts Journal</i> , Jan. 1909	Box 4, Folder 1
<i>The Village Magazine</i> , Vachel Lindsay, 1910	Box 4, Folder 2
Portfolio [Club] Materials, 1910-66	Box 4, Folder 3
<i>The Pageant of Indiana</i> , William Chauncey Langdon, 1916	Box 4, Folder 4
<i>The Village Magazine</i> , Vachel Lindsay, 1920	Box 4, Folder 5
<i>Indianapolis: The Old Town and the New</i> , Lee Burns, 1923	Box 4, Folder 6
<i>The Masters of Modern Art</i> , Walter Pach, 1924	Box 4, Folder 7
Irvington Dramatic Club Pamphlet, 1928	Box 4, Folder 8



<i>An Ecological Study of the Heath Balds of the Great Smoky Mountains</i> , Stanley A. Cain, 1930	Box 4, Folder 9
<i>The American Magazine of Art</i> , 1933	Box 4, Folder 10
<i>Scholastic</i> , 4 Jan. 1936	Box 4, Folder 11
<i>Contemporary Art of the United States</i> , 1940	Box 4, Folder 12
<i>A Glimpse of Irvington Then and Now 1870–1970</i> , Gertrude Hecker Winders, 1970	Box 4, Folder 13
<i>Art in Richmond 1898–1978</i> , 1978	Box 4, Folder 14

### **Series 6: Family Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Family History Materials and Records, 1860s–late 20 <sup>th</sup> century	Box 4, Folder 15
Clifton A. Wheeler, 8 Weeks Old, 30 Oct. 1883	Tintypes
Formal Portraits of Clifton Wheeler, ca. 1883–1946	Photographs Box 1, Folder 1
Family Photographs and Snapshots, ca. 1900–53	Photographs Box 1, Folder 2

### **Series 7: Sketchbooks and Other Drawn Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
A Note Regarding Sketchbooks, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 16
Sketchbook, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1891	Graphics Box 1, Folder 1
Loose Sketches, Hilah Drake Wheeler 1894–1908	Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
Sketchbook, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1899–1900	Graphics Box 1, Folder 3
Sketchbook, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1903	Graphics Box 1, Folder 4

Sketchbook, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1903–08	Graphics Box 1, Folder 5
Sketchbook, Hilah Drake Wheeler, 1907–09	Graphics Box 1, Folder 6
Loose Sketches, Clifton Wheeler, ca. 1920s–1952	Graphics Box 1, Folder 7
Loose Sketch, Clifton Wheeler, not dated	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, not dated	Graphics Box 1, Folder 8
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, not dated	Graphics Box 1, Folder 9
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, not dated	Graphics Box 1, Folder 10
Sketchbook with Notes, Clifton Wheeler, 1935–36	Graphics Box 1, Folder 11
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, 1940–41	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 3
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, 1945–46	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 4
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, 1947–49	Graphics Box 1, Folder 12
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, 1948–50	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 5
Sketchbook, Clifton Wheeler, 1950–51	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 6
<i>Portfolio Memory Book for Charles and Lionne Rush,</i> 1929	BV 4950
Mock Diploma from Herron, probably early 1930s	OVA Graphics Box 1, Folder 1

## **Series 8: Travel Images**

### CONTENTS

Postcards, Gibraltar and Italy, 1907 and 1910

Postcards, Colorado and New York State, not dated

Postcards, Great Smoky Mountains, not dated

Photographs, Italy, ca. 1907–10

Photographs, Colorado, not dated

Photographs, New York State, not dated

Photographs of Trees by Clifton Wheeler, not dated

Photographs, Gatlinburg and Kentucky, 1926

### CONTAINER

Graphics  
Box 1, Folder 13

Graphics  
Box 1, Folder 14

Graphics  
Box 1, Folder 15

Photographs  
Box 1, Folder 5

Photographs  
Box 1, Folder 6

Photographs  
Box 1, Folder 7

Photographs  
Box 1, Folder 8

Photographs  
Box 1, Folder 9

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1083).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.